

own experience also shows that the importance of active civil society in foreign policy development is growing world-wide. This trend is evidenced, for example, by the Centre's discussions with representatives of the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Unidad de Coordinación y Enlace). Increasingly, NGO representatives participate in processes that have foreign policy implications. For instance, some NGOs were invited to participate in the Spousal Summit meeting.

Robert Finbow of Dalhousie University then proceeded to introduce the subject and outline the day's discussion. He argued that despite the general euphoria that democracy has triumphed in Latin America there still exist some serious challenges. He referred to a map generated by CNN which classified countries as democratic (blue) and undemocratic (yellow). The map showed only two countries, Cuba and Peru, as the yellow exceptions in the sea of blue. According to Finbow, this classification is overly simplistic. It is necessary to critically evaluate the various models of democracy (i.e., procedural form, high/low degree of dispersal, etc.) in order to get a clear picture of the level of democratisation in Latin America. The problem of backsliding from democratic achievements has also become a problem. Pertinent questions should include: does economic liberalisation weaken public participation and how? Should theorists begin to focus on consolidation of democracy issues rather than transition stage issues? How is social order, democracy and prosperity related? What could be some of the alternative models of democracy, besides presidential, in Latin America?

2. Defining Democracy

The discussion started with attempts to define democracy. Some argued that one of the elements of a democracy is a clear separation of powers, some theory of participation and some theory of equality. Others argued that the concept of democracy is dynamic. It changes according to its contexts (i.e., liberalisation, globalisation).

Problems arise in defining "the" model for democracy since, as Christine Paponnet-Cantat from the University of New Brunswick argued, the perception of democracy is contentious even in Canadian classrooms. (The disputed connection between the market and democracy may serve as an example). Others pointed out that the electoral system in Canada is itself quite archaic and mostly inapplicable in the Latin American context (the Canadian Parliamentary system *versus* the American Presidential system). Therefore, extreme care should be taken not to superimpose Canadian ideas about concepts such as majoritarianism or egalitarianism. (Majoritarianism as well as egalitarianism can easily thrive in democracies and authoritarian regimes alike.)

Max Cameron of the Carleton University argued that there has been an apparent shift in perceiving the viability of a democracy, at least theoretically. **The focus on procedures and institutions, elections in particular, has shifted to evaluating "democratic" behaviour and outcomes.** An important dimension to assessing a democratic order has been thus added. The